

12 o'clock

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FEB 2
1851

Office duty

Ship Head

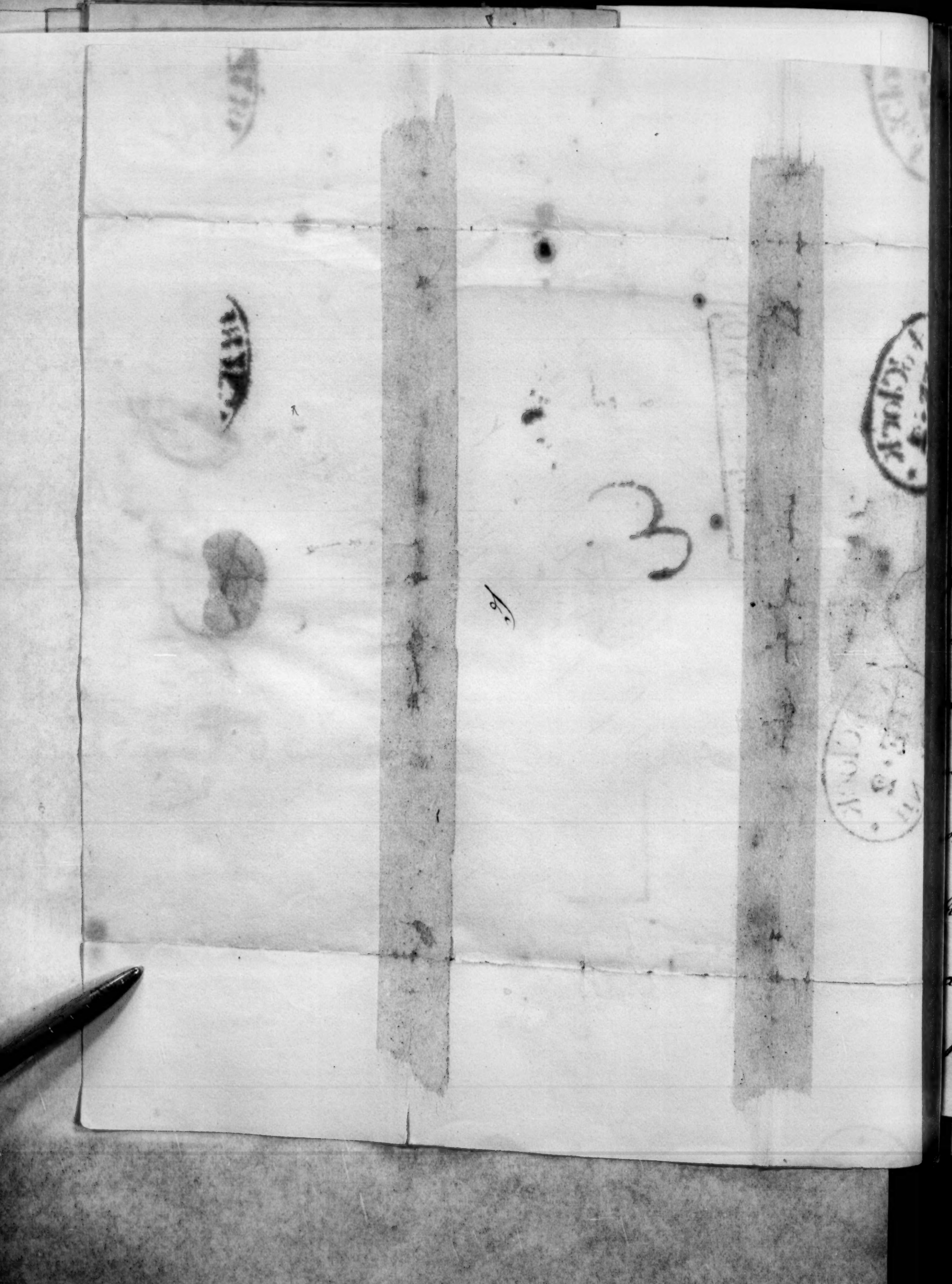
Richard Abbot Esq.

Walthamstow

JB

1851





February 1st.

Hampstead

My dear Girl

I have been this week wishing to write to you but putting it off every day in hopes of having something ^{concerning your brother} to communicate which would not give you pain. but it is in vain to wait any longer. Oh my dear, he is very ill. he has been so ever since the 8th of December. If I had written this letter two hours sooner I should have owned to you that I had scarcely a hope remaining and now when I have just received a letter from M^r Severn with the nearest approaching to good news that we have ^{had} got since this last attack, there is nothing to rest upon, merely a hope, a chance. But I will tell you all in as collected a way as I can. On the 10th of Jan^{ary} M^r Brown received a letter ^{from} from home saying your brother had been attacked with spitting of

blood and that the symptoms were very bad. He had been ill
for 17 days and did not appear to get better. I judged of you
by myself and though I was then about to write I deferred it for
some time in hopes a letter more cheering might arrive. I can
think I was wrong. If you knew how much I regretted that
it had not been kept from me - how continually I thought
a fortnight or even a weeks ignorance of it would have been
some pain spared - and when at last I could not bear to
keep silence any longer for fear you should fancy the least
neglect should have occasioned it, I wrote a letter that with-
out
mentioning any thing positively bad, did not, if I may judge
from ^{your} answer give you hopes of a speedy recovery. Once or twice
we have heard slight accounts, which were neither calculated
to raise nor depress our hopes but yesterday I was told of a
letter from the Physician which said he was exactly the same

He did not get better nor did he get worse. But could I conceal
from myself that with him, not getting better he was getting worse?
If ever I gave up hope, I gave ^{it} up then I tried to destroy it; I
tried to persuade myself that I should never see him again. I
felt that you ought no longer to remain in ignorance and the
whole of this day I have been thinking how I could tell you. I am
glad, very glad, I write it, for I have just received the account I spoke
of in the beginning of this letter. ^{Mr. Leverage} He ~~says~~ says that for the first time
he feels a hope. he thinks he shall bring him back to us. Surely
that is saying a great deal - and yet the reason he gives for that
hope destroys it. for the last 3 days (the letter was dated the 11th of Jan)
your brother had been calm. he had resigned himself to die. Oh can
you bear to think of it. he had given up even wishing to live - Good God!
is it to be borne that he, formed for every good ^{thing}, and, I think I dare say it,
for every thing great, is to give up his hopes of life and happiness, so
young too, and to be murdered, for that is the case, by the mere malign-
ity of the world, joined to want of feeling in those who ought above
all to have felt for him - I am sure nothing during his long illness
~~etc.~~ has hurt me so much as to hear he was resigned to die. But

I will say no more about it. In a week or ten days I will enclose
you the letter. You should have it sooner but we are obliged, in
consequence of a letter respecting money to send it to a friend
in London first. And now my dear girl, my dear sister
for so I feel you to be forgive me if I have not sufficiently softened
this wretched news. Indeed I am not now able to contrive words that
would appear less harsh. If I am to lose him I lose every thing
and then you after my mother will be the only person I shall
feel interest or attachment for. I feel that I love his sister as
my own. God bless you. He has talked of you continually. He
did so when he was in great danger last spring. He has al-
ways expressed a wish for my mother and Mr. Dilke to call and
see you. I cannot give up a hope that you may one day come
and see me. Do you think Mr. My will ever be induced to give
his consent. If you think so whenever you write, tell me, and
my mother should ask his permission but not just at pre-
sent unless you think that would not be venturing too far at
first.

Remain, my dearest girl

Yours very affectionately
James

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